(c) No, Sir.

(d) These drugs are outside price control. However, high prices charged are being investigated.

Leakage of underground pipeline of NOCIL

4075. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major disaster was averted recently by fire brigade officials when an underground pipeline belonging to the National Organic Chemicals Industries Limited (NOCIL), carrying NAPTHA gas leaked, and caught fire on the Ghatkopar-Mankhurd link road recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the international Safety norms had been floated while laying the pipeline network; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and what action has been taken|proposed to be taken by Government against NOCIL in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (d) To the extent information is available, a leak in the underground Naptha Pipeline of NOCIL was detected by the company's staff on 3-3-1995. The portion of the pipeline was isolated after pumping of Naptha in the line was stopped. However the leaking naptha caught fire which was contained by the fire brigade personnel and the company's workers and precautions were taken to ensure that the fire does not spread. The residual neptha was burnt in a controlled manner and the minor fire was subsequently extinguished. There were no injuries or casualities. The leak was sealed on the same day.

The company's pipeline is reported to have been installed between 1972 and 1974 as per the international|national safety standards.

Shortage of chemicals and fertilizers

4076. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to cope with the shortage of chemicals and fertilizers for agriculturists;

(b) the steps taken to bring down the rise in price of fertilizers; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO):(a) to (c) No shortage of agro-chemicals has been reported to this Ministry in the recent past.

As regards fertilizers, w.e.f. 10-6-1994, Urea is the only fertilizer under price, distribution and movement control. The availability of urea in the country during the year 1994-95 was quite satisfactory with reference to the allocations made under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Temporary and localised shortages experienced during the year were met by rushing supplies from alternative sources. The indigenous production of urea has been optimised and the gap between indigenous availability and demand is being met through imports.

The overall availability of phosphatice and potassic fertilizers has been quite satisfactory with reference to the level of demand obtaining since their decontrol in August, 1992.

The controlled price of urea continues to be heavily subsidised by the Government. The controls on phosphatic and potassic fertilizers were removed w.e.f. 25-8-92. To cushion the impact of the increase in the open market prices of these fertilizers, the scheme of special concessions for decontrolled fertilizers